

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2023**

**Commissioners Present:**

Jamie Wilson . . . . .Chairman  
Michael Hennigan. . . . . Vice Chairman  
Daryl Cowart..... Commissioner  
Becky Westmoreland ..... Commissioner  
Robert Vigil..... Commissioner  
Tiffany Bell(arrived at 5:33p.m.). . . . . Commissioner

**Commissioners Absent:**

George Mortimer. . . . . Commissioner

**City Council Members Present:**

Brad Childs

**City Council Members Absent:**

Larry Spears, Jr.  
Paul Burch  
Caroline Hennigan  
Mary McKenna  
David Bailey  
Terrie Salter

**Staff Present:**

Kelvin Knauf, Director of Planning & Community Development  
Wendy Lloyd, Planning Secretary  
Mike Kunst, City Manager  
Jay Trahan, Assistant City Manager & Director of EDC  
Hillary Gravett, Assistant EDC Director

Chairman Wilson called the Planning & Zoning meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None

**WORKSHOP**

**a. Conduct a workshop on Planning and the current Comprehensive Master Plan**

Mr. Knauf stated this is going to be a series of workshops that we're going to have. We did these workshops a few years ago with the commission but I don't think a few of you were on here then. Tonight, we're going to talk about planning. There are 3 different processes - Planning, Platting, Zoning. It's like having triplets. They may all look identical but they each have a different personality.

## (Power Point Presentation on Planning)

### What is planning?

- APA definition: Works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations.
- Draws on social sciences such as public administration, political science, economics, sociology, and social psychology as well as specialized knowledge related to land use, architecture, transportation, historic preservation, housing, environmental sciences, civil engineering, management & municipal law.

### How did we get here?

- 1500s – Spanish Laws of the Indies. Regulated social, political, religious, and economic life and physical development for Spanish settlements in the New World. Codified the city planning process and first attempts at a general plan. Required a public square and a grid system for streets.
- Philadelphia, Washington D.C. and Savannah, Georgia all were planned cities
- 1909 – Plan of Chicago – first plan for a metropolitan area
- 1928 – Standard City Planning Enabling Act issued by the US Department of Commerce

### Why do we plan?

- Allows community to access current condition & issues
- Provides vision for future – should be realistic & achievable
- Coordinate/guide policies, procedures & decisions
- Provides information to potential developers/investors on how the City sees itself developing
- Provides information to the public about the community

### What is in the current Comprehensive Master Plan?

- Assessment of current conditions
- Community goals, objectives & implementation strategies
- Data & analysis
- Future Land Use Map
- Elements in the current Comprehensive Master Plan:
  - Land use & Transportation
  - Old Town Center/Waterfront
  - Economic Development
  - Historic Preservation
  - Community Facilities
  - Community Priorities
- Current plan adopted in 1996, Future Land Use Plan has been amended from time to time

### What is in the Land Use and Transportation Element?

- Goal – to create a City that protects and recognizes its historical resources, protects existing residential neighborhoods, provides for the development of new neighborhoods, provides for incentives to support new and existing commercial and manufacturing facilities, and that establishes a new urban design standard that will revitalize and reinforce the quality of Orange.

- Objectives –
  - Residential districts
    - Allow compatible, non-residential uses in certain residential zones
    - Project residential neighborhoods from blight
    - Establish residential standards to meet market conditions in the Nineties
  - Commercial district
    - Make Orange viable for commercial activity
    - Visually improve and beautify Orange by taking advantage of its natural amenities
    - Make Orange attractive to tourists
  - Industrial districts
    - Encourage the growth of new and expanding industries
    - Encourage the growth and expansion of the Port of Orange
  - Flood Plain Objectives
    - Review existing standards for development in the Flood Plains
    - Encourage recreational land uses for marginally developable land
  - Annexation Objectives
    - Annex property located in the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) into the City limits under certain conditions
    - Require that new development in the ETJ complies with the City of Orange development standards

What is in the Historic Preservation Element?

- Goal-to preserve, protect and enhance the historic sites, buildings, neighborhoods, and commercial areas of Orange
- Objectives
  - Preserves the historic character of Orange by promoting the preservation of historic neighborhoods and buildings
  - Develop public/private partnerships with financial institutions to assist in lending funds for the purpose of preserving historic buildings

What is in the Old Town Center/Waterfront Element?

- Goal-Create activities and new investment in Old Town Center. Develop the waterfront as a major visual amenity and activity generator, emphasizing educational, cultural, and institutional uses.
- Objectives
  - Improve the appearance of access streets and appearance of the Old Town Center/Waterfront from Interstate 10
  - Facilitate and promote expansion of Lamar University as the key element of downtown activity
  - Centralize the City of Orange and Orange County government facilities and staff in Old Town Center
  - Establish private and public financial and regulatory incentives to promote and attract economic development, waterfront activities and tourism
  - Provide waterfront activities for citizens of Orange

What is in the Community Facilities Element?

- Goal-to create facilities and programs which meet the service and recreational needs of Orange.
- Objectives
  - Acquire additional parkland in appropriate locations to provide adequate and usable open space linking existing and future parkland, schools, and neighborhoods
  - Increase use and appeal of existing community/recreational facilities owned by the City, County, Lamar University, school districts, and private industry
  - Consolidate the City of Orange and Orange County Government facilities and staff to the Old Town Center area

What is in the Economic Development Element?

- Goal-create a stable, economically viable and attractive community, providing jobs and creating a strong tax base.
- Objectives
  - Establish financial and regulatory incentives for all aspects of economic development by October 1, 1996.
  - Target tourism programs for families, retirees and “winter-Texans”
  - Annex property located in the ETJ into the City limits, under certain conditions

Who is involved in the planning process?

- City Council
- Planning and Zoning Commission
- Public
  - Community groups
  - Neighborhoods
  - Business interests
  - Social interests
  - Media
- Consultants
- City staff

How do we plan?

- P&Z reviews need to update the Comprehensive Master Plan and provides a recommendation to the City Council
- Council provides the funding and directs that the update of the Comprehensive Master Plan be initiated
- Requests for Proposals With Qualifications issued, proposals evaluated and planning consultant hired
- Make population projections, determine trends, and acquire accurate information on land use, transportation, drainage, infrastructure and other relevant aspect of development, economic and social issues
- Use participatory techniques to involve community residents within the planning process:
  - Public meetings to gather information
  - Surveys
  - P&Z and Council public hearings
- Evaluate information using various quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Present information using charts, maps, graphs, and other visual displays

- P&Z reviews draft of the comprehensive plan and conducts public hearings and disseminates information on the draft plan
- P&Z revises the draft plan if necessary and votes to recommend adoption by the City Council
- Council reviews plan, makes and desired changes, and adopts updated Comprehensive Master Plan

How long does it take to update the CMP?

- While it depends on how the comprehensive the plan is, it is not unusual for it to take 1 or 1.5 years

What legal issues are associated with planning?

- No prescribed format for the Comprehensive Master Plan
- The plan is a guide, not legally binding in Texas
- Charter requirements
  - Requires joint public hearing with Council and P&Z on the matter

What issues are included in planning?

- When to plan
- What to include in the plan
- Coordination of different plans
- Handling conflicts between different planning ideas/goals/objectives (NIMBYs, LULUs, CAVE people and BANANAs)
- Cost
- Anticipated future trends/needs/desires
  - Changing economic climate and income levels
  - Changing demographics
  - Technological changes
  - Social changes
  - Natural/environmental changes
  - Federal/state legislative mandates/laws
  - More participatory, more electronically based and concerned with increasingly complex issues
- Changing planning techniques and policies to meet future needs

What has changed in Orange since Comprehensive Master Plan adopted in 1996?

- Hurricanes
- Flooding from the Sabine River
- Economic Development Corporation created
- New City facilities constructed
- Interstate 10 expansion
- Annexations and disannexations – new State laws
- Proposed levee system
- New subdivisions and commercial development
- Expanded industry – Gold Triangle Polymers plant

What does staff suggest?

- “Envision Orange 2050”

- Elements (minimum)
  - Introduction
  - Population projects and estimates
  - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT analysis)
  - Land Use
  - Transportation (streets, highways, public transportation, alternative transportation)
  - Infrastructure (water, wastewater, drainage, parks and recreation, City facilities)
  - Resilience (preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters)
- Hire a consultant
- Use the Planning & Zoning Commission
- Conduct surveys and public hearings – emphasize public participation

Mr. Knauf asked for any questions or comments.

Chairman Wilson stated do we know when we will know if we get the grant. Mr. Knauf stated we just don't know at this point. This is a grant through the Texas General Land Office. Vice Chair Hennigan stated do we know the grant type. Mr. Knauf stated it's my understanding that it will pay all if not most of the cost. That's my understanding at this point and we are at the very beginning of the process.

Council Member Childs stated on your list of elements that changed you know we lost a hospital but we're gaining a med center. We are an aging community. Are they going to be able to take care of us. We went from a hospital to a med center. That was a huge change we had in the area. Chairman Wilson stated but you know in all cities really because all of the pop-up ERs. That's been nationwide and that's been a big change and people are not using the Emergency Room for anything when they can just go to the parking lot there in Wal-Mart or whatever. This is just very interesting to think about where we were in 1996 and where we are today in 2023. It's just very cool what somebody had the foresight to see what we had the potential to do and it's also overwhelming to think that 2050 is not that far. Vice Chair Hennigan stated when we think about things like the hospital, we don't know if Baptist Hospital of Southeast Texas is looking at our growth spurt we are having right now in Orange. Maybe their sitting back rebuilding their master plan and saying maybe we'll open the hospital back up in the near future. We don't know what's going to happen with it. We just know that it's there and we can't do anything about it. I think it would be great to see it opened up for something. A lot of people want to see a VA clinic there. It would be lovely and would bring the veterans in from all over Southeast Texas and up north and even into Louisiana. But we don't know what their plan is. Commissioner Westmoreland stated Brad I think that was a good point about the hospital because these pop ups, they don't take Medicare. Council Member Childs stated right and that's one of the major changes that has happened since 1996 and should it be part of our future thought process.

Vice Chair Hennigan stated there is so much date in this current master plan that is so outdated and needs upgraded. I've taken the time to look through it and there's so much in there that doesn't pertain to Orange anymore and that's why we need to change it. Unfortunately, in 2050 the millennials now have to live with that in 2050 so whatever changes we make will be on them. Commissioner Bell stated we adapt well. I guess we have a different attitude and Kelvin made a good point on how his generation thought one way and we think another way. However, you will see some of us are changing our thought process just a little bit like life insurance, homes, just little things. Mr. Knauf stated yes your generations are more health conscious than ours. Also, I can take an EKG with my watch. Council Member Childs stated and being an aging community we get our kids off to get an education and come back but the problem is we haven't been able to get them to come back.

They go away but we turn the community around and help kids come back we won't be an aging community any more.

Chairman Wilson stated so we can't really do anything yet. Mr. Knauf stated no this is just a workshop.

Commissioner Vigil stated before we start I think we have to prioritize what we want to emphasize first. I think we need to add the population and where people are moving to so we can make judgement based on data. I have an opinion where I think they are but what does the data really say? Vice Chair Hennigan stated that will change in 6 months. Chairman Wilson stated but the data does have to drive this but I think this is such a massive undertaking that we have to eat this elephant one bite at a time. We just need to go from page 1 to the end to kind of think about where we are but definitely date driven for sure because it's nice to say we need all these facilities but if we don't have the money to back it. Everything has got to have a dollar sign with it. Commissioner Vigil stated and having the community input so we can know from the public what their desires are so we get a view besides ourselves on what does the community want. Vice Chair Hennigan stated all that's documented in here and they actually did that and went around to all the areas like the Roselawn area and other areas of the city to find out what their input was. What do you want to see? What do you want Orange to be in 10 years? We can have similar type things with the P&Z.

Chairman Wilson stated thank you for making copies for all us and thank you for your presentation. I think it was well put together. It's just exciting just to see change and to be able to effect that change and to be able to see our city grow.

#### **PLANNING & ZONING APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Consider the minutes of the January 3, 2023, Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.**

Vice Chair Hennigan motioned to approve  
Commissioner Bell 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Vote: 6 – 0**

**Motion Carries**

**Chairman Wilson adjourned the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting at 6:29 p.m.**